

Appreciate it. It's good to be home.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas; Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama; Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; and Gail J. McGovern, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross.

Remarks at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas

September 1, 2008

The President. You know, one of the great things about our country is the number of people who volunteer during one of these incidents. Here are some Red Cross volunteers. They are—they symbolize the thousands that will help.

And my call to our fellow citizens is that—find out how you can help. You can help by volunteering. You can help by contributing to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Somebody is going to say, “Well, I don’t know how to.” Well, it’s pretty easy. You can get on the web page. If you’re interested in the Red Cross, just call up Red Cross on your—and they’ll steer you to the way to help anyway.

America is a great country. It’s great because we’ve got great people. Nobody is happy about these storms; everybody is praying for everybody’s safety. But I’m confident that after the storm passes and there’s a human need, it will be met because of the generosity of the American people.

And I want to thank you all for setting such a good example.

Volunteer. You’re very welcome, very welcome.

The President. Appreciate you.

Volunteer. Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. at the Alamo Regional Command Reception Center.

Statement on the War on Terror in Iraq

September 1, 2008

Today in Iraq, responsibility for security in Anbar Province was transferred to Iraqi civilian authorities. Iraqi forces will now take the lead in security operations in Anbar, with American troops moving into an overwatch role. Not long ago, Anbar was one of the most dangerous Provinces in Iraq. Al Qaida was in control of almost every major population center, and its leaders intended to turn Anbar Province into a safe haven from which to plan and launch further attacks against Iraqis and others in the region as well as here at home.

Today, Anbar is no longer lost to Al Qaida; it is Al Qaida that lost Anbar. Iraqis, like countless other Muslims across the world, witnessed Al Qaida’s brutality firsthand and rejected it. As a result, Anbar has been transformed and reclaimed by the Iraqi people. This achievement is a credit to the courage of our troops, the Iraqi Security Forces, and the brave tribes and other civilians from Anbar who worked alongside them.

Today’s ceremony returns the 11th of 18 Provinces to Provincial Iraqi control. Al Qaida and Iranian-backed special groups remain a threat, but the United States and the nations of Multi-National Forces—Iraq continue to stand with the Iraqis as they work to defeat these enemies and build a democracy in the heart of the Middle East. The success of Iraq will make the American people more secure and help yield the peace we all desire.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.